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The inner wrapper 4 is an elongated, preferably rectangular sheet having fold lines 6, 7, and 8 which extend transversely across the sheet, dividing the sheet into four panels 9, 10, 11, and 12 of substantially equal size. The panels 9-12 include the two adjacent panels 10 and 11, on each of which a single glove 2 or 3 is placed. Thus each panel 10 and 11 is of more than adequate size to accommodate a glove 2 or 3 and to maintain each glove in a normal unfolded position.

Similarly, as shown in FIG. 3, the outer wrapper 5 is a sheet member which is preferably rectangular in shape and which is divided by fold lines 13, 14, 15, and 16 extending diagonal to the sides of the wrapper 5. The fold lines 17, 18, 19, and 20 extend perpendicular to the lines 13-16 and combine with the lines 13-16 and 17-20 to provide panels 21, 22, 23, 25, and 26. The panels 21, 22, and 23 are rectangular and substantially equal in size to the panels 9-12 of the inner wrapper 4. The panel 22 is preferably centrally disposed between opposite pairs of corners of the wrapper 5 with panels 21 and 23 on opposite longitudinal sides. The several fold lines also provide corner flaps 27, 28, 29, and 30 which are triangular in configuration.

In FIG. 1 each glove 2 and 3 is placed upon the open inner wrapper 4, as shown, with the wrist portion turned back telescopically over the palm portion. The gloves 2 and 3 are disposed with the palm portions up with the thumbs upright and with the fingers extending in one direction and in the center of the panels 10 and 11 in correct right and left-hand positions. In those positions the gloves are properly disposed for the user with a minimum of fumbling and turning. With the cuff or wrist portion preliminarily turned back, the user need not perform that operation before donning the gloves. Moreover, in those positions the gloves are properly disposed to permit complete penetration by steam during the sterilization treatment.

After the gloves 2 and 3 are placed upon the panels 10 and 11 of the inner wrapper 4, the outer panels 9 and 12 are folded along the fold lines 6 and 8 over the gloves to the positions shown in FIG. 2. Thereafter, a package 31 of powder, for the user's hands before putting on the gloves, is placed upon the panel 9 and the portion of the wrapper 4 including the glove 3 is folded along the fold line 7 onto the portion of the wrapper containing the glove 2 to the position shown in FIG. 3. Both gloves 2 and 3 are then centrally disposed on the center panel 22 of the outer wrapper 5.

The outer wrapper 5 is then folded on the crease line 15 with the panel 23 overlaying the panel 22 and with the flap 28 folded on the fold line 16 and overlaying the panel 23 on the side opposite that of the panel 22. Thereafter the panels 25 and 26 are folded along the respective fold lines 18 and 19 over the panel 23 and flap 28 to the position shown in FIG. 5. At the same time, the flaps 29 and 30, being folded on the fold lines 17 and 20, are preferably disposed upwardly and at an angle to the panels 25 and 26, as shown. With the flaps 29 and 30 turned upwardly as shown, they facilitate opening of the package 1 when the gloves are unwrapped.

Thereafter the package is folded along the line 14 from the position of FIG. 5 to that of FIG. 6 with the flap 27 extending from the folded package as shown. The last fold includes folding of the flap 27 along the line 13 to the position shown in FIG. 7, in which position a pressure sensitive tape 32 is applied to hold the flap 27 in place. The tape 32 includes ordinarily invisible marks which become visible upon exposure of the package to the heat or other conditions of sterilization, such as by steam. At the same time, the pressure sensitive tape 32 serves as a sealing means for holding the flap 27 in place on the panel 22 and may be removed when the package is opened for use.

Another embodiment of the package is shown in FIG. 8 where a package 1a is folded to the intermediate posi-

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tion similar to that of FIG. 5. The package 1a, however, differs from that of 1 in FIG. 5 in that the flaps 29 and 30 are folded one over the other rather than as shown in FIG. 5.

Another embodiment is also shown in FIG. 9 for the inner wrapper generally indicated at 4a. The flaps 9a and 12a resemble flaps 9 and 12 in FIG. 2 except that the abutting edges thereof are provided with additional upturned flap portions 9b and 12b, respectively, to facilitate opening of the inner wrapper similar to the positions of the flaps 29 and 30 in FIG. 5.

The package 1 may be provided with the gloves enclosed either at the time of original packaging of the gloves or prior to sterilization thereof. Where the gloves are of the type for re-use, a new package 1 is provided each time the gloves are sterilized. However, where the gloves are of the disposable type and are disposed of after one use, the package is provided only at the point of original sale.

The device of the present invention provides a package having separate inner and outer wrappers which greatly increase the maintenance of sterile characteristics of the gloves between the sterilization process and the actual donning of the gloves by the user.

The particular manner in which the inner and outer wrappers are disposed with respect to each other, as well as the manner in which the gloves are placed in the wrapper not only enables one who is unwrapping the package to do so with a maximum of protection of the sterile characteristics, but also provides sufficient area around the gloves themselves when the package is opened to prevent non-sterile objects from coming into contact therewith. Unlike prior packages for surgical gloves, the package of the instant invention is not only easily opened but provides sufficient wrapper surface to permit handling of the gloves, if necessary, in the absence of a flat surface on which to place the open package, such as a table. Under such conditions the inner and outer wrappers may be separated while holding the sterile gloves within the inner wrapper, such as by an assistant holding the inner wrapper open with the gloves in place and in easy reach for the user.

In the foregoing description certain terms have been used for brevity, clearness and understanding, but no unnecessary limitations have been implied therefrom as such words are used for descriptive purposes and are intended to be broadly construed.

Moreover, the embodiment of the improved construction illustrated and described herein is by way of example and the scope of the present invention is not limited to the exact construction shown.

Having now described the invention, construction, operation and use of a preferred embodiment thereof and the advantageous, new and useful results obtained thereby; the new and useful surgical glove package and reasonable mechanical equivalents thereof obvious to those skilled in the art are set forth in the appended claim.

What is claimed is:

A package for containing surgical gloves during and after sterilization including an inner wrapper, an outer wrapper, and a pair of surgical gloves; the inner wrapper comprising a rectangular sheet of steam-pervious paper having free side and end edges and provided with a central and two intermediate substantially equally spaced fold lines parallel with the end edges and perpendicular to said side edges, the fold lines dividing said inner wrapper into a pair of adjacent central panels and two outer panels; the inner wrapper receiving said pair of gloves to be contained by surface engagement only of one central panel with one of said gloves and by surface engagement only of one outer panel with said one glove and by similar surface engagement only of the other central and outer panels with the other of said gloves upon folding the outer panels on the intermediate fold lines to positions superimposed upon the central panels and by further fold-